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ABSTRACT

Beginning with a review of signs and signals of public attitudes toward American education over the last 15 years, this paper analyzes some concerns regarding public confidence in public schools. Following a brief introduction, issues involved in the definition and behavioral attributes of confidence are mentioned. A synopsis of three approaches to confidence building--communications, public relations, and marketing--is followed by a review of research, theory, and reported practice on school-community relations and communications. A description is then given of a pilot survey conducted by the Phi Delta Kappa Commission for Developing Public Confidence in Schools in which commission members distributed survey cards to graduate students, parents, school personnel, and others in Ohio, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Indiana to obtain additional information as to what causes people either to gain or to lose confidence in education. Preliminary results show that of the 23 categories included in the survey, "teacher attitudes" was ranked by the 148 respondents as the most important for both gains and losses in their confidence in schools. These results indicate that educators must (1) pay more attention to affective strategies and less to cognitive-oriented approaches, and (2) expand their confidence-building tools into areas suggested by public relations and marketing. A two-page bibliography, extensive tables, and three appendixes are included. (JBM)

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Information and Communication: Tools for Increasing Confidence in the Schools (AERA: New Orleans, 4/84).*

Introduction

Many signs and signals suggest that American education is due for reform. (Is political expediency the mother of educational innovation?) A recent spate of reports on various aspects of the condition of education has brought education to the national limelight in the eyes of politicians, practitioners, and the public. Public concern for education, however, is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the history of American public education is replete with public involvement and concern. Education's major governance structure, the lay board of education, reflects the public's interests and concern for education (even if the board is sometimes only symbolic or perfunctory).

Since 1969 the Phi Delta Kappan has published the annual Gallup poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools. In September, 1983 the Kappan published the results of the 15th annual Gallup Education Poll. A summary of all 15 education polls [Elam, S. M., "The Gallup Education Surveys: Impressions of a Poll Watcher," Kappan, 65, 1(September, 1983), 26-30] shows that the most frequently cited problems of the public schools have remained remarkably constant over the last 15 years. Except for 1971, discipline has been the number one school problem and high on the list have been finances, teachers, drugs, and curriculum standards.

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* By C. M. Achilles, Professor, Educational Administration and Supervision, College of Education, Univ. of TN, Knoxville, TN 37996-3400 and M.N. Lintz, Graduate student (same address). Both authors work with the P.D.K. Commission for Developing Public Confidence in the Schools (Dr. W. W. Wayson, Ohio State University, Chair). Portions of the material in this paper also appeared in Achilles and Lintz, "Public Confidence in Public Education: A Growing Concern in the '80's," Paper at MSERA. 11/83.

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One Gallup education survey question really assessed people's confidence in education as shown by the public's rating or "grading" of schools from A to F. In 1983, 31 percent of the respondents gave the schools an A or B (but in 1974, 48% did). However, the percent assigning D's and F's increased from 11 in 1974 to 20 in 1983. These two figures portray a serious decline. Viewed another way, good grades exceeded bad grades in 1974 by about 37 points, (48 to 11). By 1983, the good exceeded the bad by only 11 points (31 to 20), and there was a 17-point decline in "good" from 48 to 31.

Another indicator of public disfavor is the response of parents who indicate that they would encourage their youngsters to enter teaching as a career. In 1969, 75% of the respondents said "yes" to a teaching career for their children, and only 15% said "no". By 1983, 45% said "yes" and 33% said "no". These and other indicators identify a continuing erosion of public confidence in public schools. Many reports on public schools appeared in 1983. Most of these find schools lacking. Education Under Study (Griesemer and Butler, 1983) summarized eight of the national studies and showed that three themes for improvement permeate these eight studies: curriculum issues, teachers and teaching, and students and learning (p. 5).

Professional journals report information on public confidence. For example, AASA's School Administrator contains a continuing column by Gary Marx entitled "Public Confidence." An AASA survey, "Problem Areas for School Administrators," list public confidence as 4 (of 71) concerns in both 1980-81 and 1982-83 (The School Administrator, July/August, 1983, p. 30). Articles in professional journals increasingly report a declining public confidence in schools. Statements such as those by Cuban are examples: "...continually looking over their shoulders at an underconfident public...." and "The erosion

of public confidence in schooling...." (Cuban, 1983: 695). An additional indication of the concern for declining confidence was the formation by Phi Delta Kappa of a special commission (The Commission for Developing Public Confidence in Schools, W. W. Wayson, Ohio State University, Chairman) to review the concerns of public confidence and to provide recommendations as to how to improve the public's confidence in their schools. An indirect indicator of confidence, and one that was studied thoroughly a few years back, was the public's reluctance to pass school bond issues. Results of research reported in the Fall, 1983 R & D Report put much of this concern in perspective:

> At the same time people's confidence in education showed a consistent decline....(C)oncludes Hans Weiler of Stanford's Institute for Research on Educational Finance and Governance ....
>
> 'The decline of public confidence in education is but a reflection of a much more encompassing and pervasive erosion of confidence in public authority and public institutions, and this general erosion may well spill over into the realm of attitudes toward specific institutions which, like schools, are sponsored and sustained by public authority.'
>
> Weiler, a professor of education and political science, is interested in connections between public confidence in education and trust in public authority. Surveys indicate that concerns over education rank at or near the top in five western nations, and share first place with crime control in the United States. (Emphasis added. R & D Report, Fall, 1983, p. 11).

Thus, it seems fair to say that not only is there a decline in confidence in the public schools but there has also been some dramatic response to this decline. The response has been in the form of reports, papers, articles, research, and even commissions. This paper analyzes some concerns regarding confidence, and especially public confidence in the public schools.

First, it touches on issues surrounding the problem of confidence -- its definition and behavioral attributes. Second, it summarizes a review of

research, theoretic literature and reported practice regarding school-community relations, communications, public relations, mass media, and "marketing" of schools. Third, the paper discusses some preliminary work of the PDK Commission for Developing Public Confidence in the Schools. The Commission's report is not due until late 1984, so this paper necessarily includes only preliminary results.

Issues Surrounding Confidence: Definition and Attributes

An early task of the PDK Commission was to seek some definition of confidence -- not just a dictionary definition, but one that also related to educational practice. Tasks that seem easy at first glance may get out of hand. A rather lengthy discussion of the definitional problem appears in Appendix A which contains fairly detailed excerpts from working notes developed by two Commission members.

The notion of confidence and the need to build a positive image of schools and education have been part of the "craft knowledge" of education. Graduate schools offer courses on school-community relations or the politics of education. There are courses or sessions on parent-teacher conferences, public involvement in schools, seeking and coordinating external resources for the classroom. Schools have their open houses, booster clubs, parent-teacher-student organizations, etc.

A Synopsis of Three Approaches to Confidence

For purposes of this paper, approaches to confidence building have been divided into three categories. These three categories, in approximate chronological order of their appearance and advocacy are: 1) Communications; 2) Public Relations (PR); and 3) Marketing. This order seems also to represent the amount of involvement, or the intensity of interactions between the school and

the audience it is trying to influence. What are the relationships among these three approaches when applied to school confidence-building efforts? Figures 1-3 on the following pages provide a basis for comparing and analyzing three approaches to confidence-building efforts in the schools.

Educators have typically dealt with the issue of public confidence in the public schools on a cognitive and "rational" basis. This was exemplified by the school-community relations approach that advocated communications, such as newsletters, home visits, open houses, etc. The basic strategy was to open and expand communications between the home and school. The communications approach relies on a rational-empirical model of change. Through primarily one-way communications steps, it attempts to put forth straight-forward data and explanations and counts on people to make rational choices based on the information. Figure 1 summarizes the communications approach to "confidence." This figure (also figures 2 and 3) displays major elements of this confidence-building strategy (communications) in columns: assumptions, strategies, advantages and/or strengths, disadvantages and/or weaknesses, and some leading advocates.

Next in chronology, in sophistication and in intensity of effort and interaction is the public relations (PR) mode of confidence-building strategies. This approach combines the rational-empirical and the normative-re-educative processes of change. Public interest and involvement are sought through public opinion polls and needs-sensing approaches that result in data which become part of the process. Programs, packages, and processes are presented to the people in a sort of "Well, this is what you asked for" format. Involvement and responses to apparent needs are counted on to generate a feeling of confidence in the schools. Figure 2 presents a summary of the PR approach to

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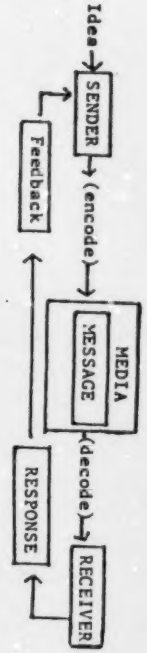

Kotler: 355 (Adapted)

Basic Assumptions	Basic Strategies	Advantages Strengths	Disadvantages Weaknesses	Leading Advocates
All people "understand" People tend to make rational decisions Reasonably Simple Model: Message Medium Sender Receiver Feedback	Single-channel, but diverse channels (e.g.) Press release Newsletter News story (media) Open House "Good News" note Bond Elections One-way info. flow One-sided story "Left-brained" or cognitive orientation Conferences (parents) Involvement Preparation of Studies Rational-Empirical Approach to change Community Education and Community School	Considerable Research Base Models and Theory "Natural" function of People Socially respectable to communication Some coalitions exist (PTA, NSBA) Planned national meetings and agendas Scheduled publications (There are some delivery systems) Primary reliance on one-way and highly cognitive appeals to intelligence. Involvement in School on school's terms	"Familiarity" Presumption of understanding Delivery systems (not diverse or imaginative) Time-consuming (if done correctly) Lack of attention to research and to planning for purpose (seldom a clear notion of purpose) Often only negative or threating (e.g., more taxes, report cards) Audience/consistuency are usually limited to parents Jargon/argot/cant Hit or miss approach Lack of any affective or connotative approach; rely only on cognitive. Dissemination provides information but does not always lead to behavior change.	Professional groups AASA NSPRA NSBA Info systems (ERIC) --- L. Stiles P. West Many profs (e.g., classes on school/community relations) Articles on school/community relations are plentiful. Community Education groups; community education legislation

Figure 1. A summary of the Communication Approach to "Confidence."

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	Basic Assumptions	Basic Strategies	Advantages Strengths	Disadvantages Weaknesses	Leading Advocates
Public Relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures on an individual or an organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. ("Public Relations News," October 27, 1947)	Public relations is primarily a communications tool. Public relations seeks to influence attitudes. Public relations does not define goals of the organization.	Identify target publics, both primary and secondary. Measure public's attitudes/opinions. Assemble data and set goals for establishing an image. Implement PR activities. Evaluation activities. A combination of Normative Re-educative and Rational-Empirical Approaches to Change	Emphasis on person-to-person contact. Allows for a variety of media and tools (written material, audio-visual material, news, events, speeches, telephone, etc.) Involvement in schools The school maintains control: schedule, etc.	Expenditure of public funds for the function. Shows only one side-usually the positive. Tries to make a point. Not refined-does not reach across publics.	Edward L. Bernays Phillip West Don Gallagher

Figure 2. A summary of the Public Relations (PR) Approach to "Confidence."

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	Basic Assumptions	Basic Strategies	Advantages Strengths	Disadvantages Weaknesses	Leading Advocates
Marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of carefully formulated programs designed to bring about voluntary exchanges of values with target markets for the purpose of achieving organizational objectives. (Philip Kotler, Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations)	Marketing is a communication tool. It includes needs assessment development, and dissemination. Marketing tries to elicit specific behaviors, such as voting, joining, volunteering, etc. Marketing is closely involved in defining the business mission, clients and services. New forms of engagement with different sectors of the community.	Studying the market needs. Designing appropriate programs and services to suit those needs. Implementing the plan. Segmenting the market.	Can improve satisfaction in target audience by understanding their needs. Attracts various resources including volunteers, funds and public support. Improves systems for developing and disseminating services. Total organization orientation. What is learned should feedback into program changes and development. Decrease resistance between people and schools.	Wastes public's money. Often intrudes itself into people's lives. It is manipulative. Primarily cognitive, with catchy approaches, but still with minimal use of affective or conative strategies. Little training Little understanding "Distaste" for this	Philip Kotler Charles Weinberg Christopher Lovelock Currently some national groups are beginning to lean in this direction.

Figure 3. A summary of the Marketing Approach to "Confidence."

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"confidence."

We have labeled the third approach to confidence building Marketing. This term may not be very familiar to educators for it is borrowed from the private sector. The marketing approach may rely on strategies and approaches that have traditionally been avoided by educators for a variety of reasons. Marketing is an extension of the PR approach in that it is built upon a base of data gathered through needs-sensing strategies. Important segments of the total audience are targets for specific information or strategies; advocacy groups are sought for specific programs or points of view. Depending on how far toward "hard sell" this approach is taken, it seems to represent a combination of two change strategies: normative (as used in the PR approach) and power-coercive. Marketing involves trade-offs. (Figure 3)

All three categories of "confidence building" rely primarily on cognitive approaches; there is little reliance on affective-oriented efforts. Each approach employs some involvement or psychomotor (or conative) effort, but these tend to be in such traditional aspects as the open house. One domain, the cognitive, gets the bulk of the attention. Figure 4 portrays some key variables relating to ways of impacting knowing and acting as these influence confidence. It is apparent that creative procedures for improving confidence remain to be explored and used (See Appendix A for ideas on expanding the confidence-building modalities.) Figure 4 suggests three lines or levels of effort employing the three domains--affective, cognitive and psychomotor. Each line of effort is directed at one aspect of influencing--attitude, belief, or value. Each line, if followed and used accurately, would influence confidence; a combination of all lines should get the best results since it would impact all three domains.

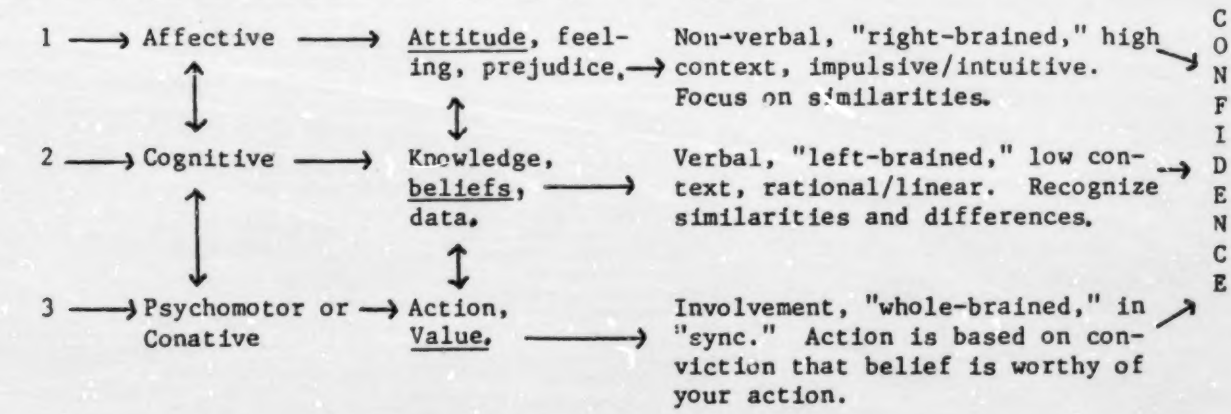

Figure 4. Paradigm suggesting forces and interrelationships relating knowing and acting as these influence "confidence"

Review of Literature and Studies *

An initial search identified 14 studies (i.e. research and demonstration as opposed to articles describing one "successful" approach) of importance to this review. Table I provides a summary of the school-community relations or communications practices/techniques described in these studies. Table I also includes a first attempt to categorize confidence-building practices and techniques into learning styles (Appendix B) and the action levels(s) from Figure 4, p. 10. Table I shows the heavy reliance on cognitive approaches (action level 2) and primarily cognitive learning styles (I, II, III, App. B.) Including multiple entries, there are 49 entries for cognitive (action level 2), 15 for affective (action level 1) and 12 for psychomotor (action level 3).

*Work done by M.N. Lintz for the PDK Commission. This review will be expanded prior to development of the Commission's final report.

TABLE I

IDENTIFIED PRACTICES/TECHNIQUES in SCHOOL PUBLIC INFORMATION and COMMUNICATIONS STUDIES AND PUBLICATIONS

STUDY OR PUBLICATION NAME/AUTHOR/DATE

	STUDY OR PUBLICATION NAME	AUTHOR	DATE
A.	School Communications: Ideas That Work	Hagin, Grazian, Harrison	1972
B.	"A Study of Public Information Practices among Selected School Systems of the United States"	Norman	1972
C.	"The Teacher, NEA and the Quality of Education"	National Education Association National Opinion Survey	1978
D.	"The Effectiveness of Communication Media Used in Tennessee Public School Systems"	Hyder	1979
E.	"The Origin of Ohio Households' Opinion About Public Education"	McGeever	1979
F.	What People Think About Their Schools: Gallup Findings	Smith and Gallup, PDK Fastback #94	1977
G.	"Put the Public Back into School P.R."	Holliday	1980
H.	"Opinions of Michigan Citizens about the Public School"	Technical Assistance Center, Ingham Intermediate School District, Mason Michigan	1981
I.	"Building Confidence in Education"	Lewis Armstead	1982
J.	"School Public Relation: Communicating to the Community"	Kinder	1982
K.	"National School Public Relations Association Shape of Education Kit"	NSPRA Wherry, Executive Director	1983
L.	"Building Public Confidence in Our Schools"	American Association of School Administrators (AASA)	1983
M.	"Community Education and Implication to Leadership" Tennessee Education	Hantel	1983

TABLE I

IDENTIFIED PRACTICES/TECHNIQUES IN SCHOOL PUBLIC INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS STUDIES AND/OR PUBLICATIONS

PRACTICES/TECHNIQUES	STUDY OR PUBLICATION NAME/AUTHOR/DATE														TOTAL	I*	II**
	/A/	/B/	/C/	/D/	/E/	/F/	/G/	/H/	/I/	/J/	/K/	/L/	/M/	/N/			
1. Newspapers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		12	2	I
2. News releases to newspapers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		12	2	I
3. Letters to Editor or Newspaper Columns	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		13	2	I
4. Radio/TV Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			12	2	II,I
5. News release to radio/TV	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			12	2	II,I
6. Press conferences or interviews				X					X	X					3	2	II,I
7. Public Service Announcements				X		X			X	X	X				5	2	II,I
8. Direct mailings					X				X	X					3	2	I
9. School building/district publications									X				X		2	2	I
a. school newsletters	X			X					X						3		
b. school magazines	X			X					X						3		
c. school systems newspaper	X			X					X				X		4		
d. yearbooks	X			X					X						3		
e. fact sheets about schools	X								X		X				3		
f. handbills									X		X				2		
g. employee manuals	X								X						2		
h. handbooks	X								X						2		
i. booklets	X								X						2		
j. announcements in community publication	X							X	X		X				4		
k. communication guidebooks									X						1		
l. article reprints									X						1		
m. maps	X								X						2		
n. special reports	X								X						2		
o. brochures	X								X						2		
p. research studies of community attitudes/public opinion				X											1		
q. pay envelop/report & stuffs	X								X						2		
r. bumper stickers							X		X						2		
s. posters	X								X						2		
t. tee shirts							X		X						2		
u. wallet size school calendars	X								X						2		
10. Photos	X											X	X		3	1	IV
11. Telephone calls									X	X		X			3	2	III
12. Tapes	X								X						2	2	II
13. Films, filmstrips & slides about schools/school activities	X			X					X						3	1	IV
14. Displays in community	X			X			X		X				X		5	1	IV
15. Bulletin boards	X						X		X				X		4	1	IV
16. Marquees							X		X						2	2	I
17. Parent-teacher-student association and other parent groups	X			X				X							3	1,3	III,V
18. Teacher-parent conferences	X			X					X	X			X		5	2	III
19. School information center	X			X					X						3		

*I Action Level (from Figure 4 p. 10)
**II Primary Learning Style (from Appendix B)

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TABLE I (continued)

PRACTICES/TECHNIQUES	STUDY OR PUBLICATION NAME/AUTHOR/DATE / A / B / C / D / E / F / G / H / I / J / K / L / M / N /	TOTAL	I*	II**
20. Open meetings/forums	X X X X	4	1,3	III, VII
21. Open house	X X X X X	5	all	all
22. Visitation days	X	1	all	all
23. Open school board meetings	X X X X	4	2	III
24. Coffee klatches/meeting in homes	X X X	3	all	all
25. Lunch at school with different groups/people	X X X X	4	all	all
26. Inservice meetings	X X X	3	2	I-IV
27. Speaker bureau	X X X X	4	2	II
28. Speeches to groups featuring school officials	X X	2	2	II
29. Advisory Committee	X X X	3	2	I-III
30. Information form:				
a. word-of-mouth	X X	2		
b. teachers	X X X	3		
c. student/children	X X X X	4		
d. administrators	X X X	3		
e. other school staff	X X	2		
f. parents	X X	2		
g. grandparents	X X	2		
h. neighbors/friends	X X X	3		
i. school board members	X X X	3		
j. volunteers	X	1		
k. senior citizens	X X	2		
l. welcome wagon	X X	2		
m. personal observation	X X	2		
n. key communicators -- influence groups (barbers, beauticians, real estate offices, etc.)	X X X	3		
o. community representatives on school committees	X X	2		
31. Brainstorming sessions with teachers & community	X X X X	4	2	I-III, VI
32. Golden age cards (free admission for senior citizens) and visiting senior citizen	X X X	3	3	III, VII
33. Suggestion boxes	X X	2	2,3	III
34. Community resource file	X X	2	2	
35. Guidance/administrative services offered at night	X X	2	2,3	III, VII
36. Special programs at night (back to school night/chorus programs/ orientation programs)	X	1	all	all
37. Designated days/weeks/celebrations	X X	2	all	all
38. School theme or slogan	X	1	1,2	
39. Seminars	X	1	2	I-III
40. Student classroom displays/ demonstrations	X	1	1,2	all
41. Day care centers	X	1	all	all

*I Action Level (from Figure 4 p. 10)
**II Primary Learning Style (from Appendix B)

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Again, tabulating multiple tallies, there are 71 cognitive styles (I, II, III), 24 affective styles (V, VI, VII) and 15 both (IV). Entries under category 30, Information form, were not included in these tabulations.

Table I shows that 12 of the 14 studies identified at least five confidence-building practices or techniques (these could be collapsed, although the practices were listed separately: newspapers, news releases to papers, letters to editor or news columns, radio/tv, and news releases to radio/tv). The heavy reliance on mass media for dissemination or one-way flow of information reflects the need for efficiency (e.g., low cost for wide coverage) and for reaching all portions of the community, not just parents. This is important since somewhat less than 30 percent of the population have children in the public schools. After this unanimity on five practices or techniques identified in 12 of the 14 studies, there is a rapid decline to five, and then four, of the 14 studies mentioning the same techniques.

The relative dearth of practices and techniques in action levels 1 and 3 and in learning styles IV, V, VI, VII offers some interesting possibilities for expanding and improving the confidence-building techniques for schools and educators. For example, what approaches can be conceptualized for various cells of the matrix appearing in Appendix B? What strategies can be developed to follow out the lines suggested by action levels 1 and 3 in Figure 4, p. 10.

The Commission's Pilot Test for Data Gatherings *

The PDK Commission sought to determine what caused people either to gain or to lose confidence in education. One step included reviews of literature and prior research. A second step was the pilot survey described here.

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*Work done by N.M. Lintz for PDK Commission.

Commission members distributed survey cards (Figure 5) to obtain responses from various sources (graduate classes, parents, school personnel, etc.). The responses were then classified into 23 categories for each of two conditions: 1) things that cause people to GAIN confidence and 2) things that cause people to LOSE confidence in the schools. Responses were from areas where commission personnel resided (Ohio, New Jersey, Tennessee, Indiana) and they were not random. However the initial 148 respondents provided a rich cross section and offered helpful information to guide the development of more detailed data-gathering instruments. Table II provides demographic information on the respondents.

Approximately 48 percent of the sample were parents, 55 percent were female, 13 percent were minority, 36 percent were from large cities, and 72 percent claimed to know the school or district well (a better informed group than average). About 56 percent had professional positions in education. Respondents provided answers to the following open-ended statements:

(1) I gain confidence in any school or school district when:

(2) I lose confidence in my school or school district when:

Responses were grouped and categorized. (Category definitions and example statements are in Appendix C).

Table III lists the number of times each of the 23 categories was chosen and the number of people choosing each category on both the gain and loss lists. Ranks were assigned accordingly. The category "teacher attitude" ranked highest with 74 people choosing it 109 times on the gain list and 76 people choosing it 108 times on the loss list. The "communication" and "academic performance" categories tied for the second highest ranking on the gain side with 57 of the 148 respondents choosing each. "Administrator attitudes" ranked third highest

PHI DELTA KAPPA COMMISSION ON DEVELOPING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION

FOR COMMISSION USE ONLY; DO NOT WRITE HERE

The following questionnaire asks you to make some comments which will help us learn what makes people have -- or not have -- confidence in a school or school district. Please fill out both sides of the card. You may focus on one public school or on one public school district.

1. Please indicate your focus below: 1.....
   .... I am thinking about a single public school.
   .... I am thinking about a whole school district.
   .... I am thinking about both a school and a district.

2. My relationship to the school or district is: 2.....
   .... Parent of a child in the school or district.
   .... Student in the school or district.
   .... Parent, but no child in the school or district.
   .... Member of community -- no children in school or district.
   .... Other .....

3. My school or district is: 3.....
   .... In a large city.
   .... In a small town.
   .... In a suburban area of a large city.
   .... In the country.
   .... Other .....

4. .... I know the school well. .... I don't know the school very well. 4.....

5. My occupation is ..... 5.....

6. Age: ..... 6.....

7. Sex: M..... F..... 7.....

8. Race: ....

PLEASE TURN THIS CARD OVER AND ANSWER QUESTIONS THERE.

Please be as specific as possible on questions 9 and 10. Think about your own experience and write down anything that comes to your mind.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

9. I GAIN CONFIDENCE IN MY SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT WHEN: GAIN

   (a) ..... 9a.....
   (b) ..... 9b.....
   (c) ..... 9c.....
   (d) ..... 9d.....
   (e) ..... 9e.....
   (f) ..... 9f.....
   (g) ..... 9g.....
   (h) ..... 9h.....

10. I LOSE CONFIDENCE IN MY SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT WHEN: LOSS

   (a) ..... 10a.....
   (b) ..... 10b.....
   (c) ..... 10c.....
   (d) ..... 10d.....
   (e) ..... 10e.....
   (f) ..... 10f.....
   (g) ..... 10g.....
   (h) ..... 10h.....

If you need more space, use another card or paper and show that it is part of this card. Be sure you have completed items 1-8 on the other side of this card. Thank You for helping.

Figure 5. Front and back of the form used by the PDK Commission for Developing Public Confidence in the Schools to obtain initial information on things that cause people to gain or lose confidence in schools or education.

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TABLE II

Demographics of Respondents (N=148)

No Response (N/R) and missing data were not used in computing frequency percentages.

1. Focus	N	%
N/R	1	-
Single school	50	34.0
Whole district	44	29.9
School and district	40	27.2
Education in general	13	8.8

2. Age	N	%
N/R	6	-
Up to 30	30	21.1
31-40	62	43.7
41-50	33	23.2
Over 50	17	12.0

3. Relationship to the school or district	N	%
N/R	1	-
Parent of school child	59	40.1
Student	6	4.1
Parent (child not in this school)	12	8.2
Community (not parent)	39	26.5
Teacher/Admin.	23	15.6
Other	8	5.4

4. District is:	N	%
N/R	2	-
Large city	53	36.0
Small town	30	20.5
Suburban	46	31.5
Country	9	6.2
Medium city	4	2.7
Other	4	2.7

5. Know district:	N	%
N/R	13	-
Well	98	72.5
Not well	37	27.5

6. Occupation	N	%
N/R	4	-
Hi. Ed. Teacher	15	10.4
Hi. Ed. Adm.	4	2.8
Other teacher	32	22.2
Other adm.	18	12.5
Grad., college student	12	8.3
Business	25	17.4
Aide,	11	7.6
Secretary, parent, etc.	25	17.4
Other	2	1.4

7. Race	N	%
N/R	6	-
B	18	12.6
W	124	87.4

8. Sex	N	%
N/R	2	-
M	65	44.5
F	81	55.5

Table III

Preliminary Confidence Survey Categories According to

Gain/Loss: Number of Times Chosen and Number of People Choosing and Ranks

	GAIN				LOSS			
	No. of Times Chosen	Rank	No. of People (of 148) Choosing	Rank	No. of Times Chosen	Rank	No. of People (of 148) Choosing	Rank
1. Communication	89	2	57	2	45	5	30	9
2. Community Involvement	45	6	35	7	13	16	11	15
3. Academic Programs	44	7	38	6	17	12	16	12
4. Non Academic Programs	9	16	9	16	8	18	8	18
5. Student/Teacher Ratio	1	22	1	22	5	21	5	21
6. Career/Higher Education Readiness	13	15	12	15	7	20	6	20
7. Staff Quality	40	9	32	10	43	6	35	4
8. Instructional Quality	39	10	34	9	29	10	19	10
9. Materials/Equipment	8	17	8	17	14	14	11	15
10. Buildings/Facilities	15	12	14	12	21	11	17	11
11. Teacher/Administrator Ratio	0	23	0	23	0	23	0	23
12. Discipline	14	13	14	12	39	8	34	5
13. Academic Performance	75	4	57	2	40	7	33	6
14. Student Attitudes	66	5	47	5	39	8	32	7
15. Teacher Attitudes	109	1	74	1	108	1	76	1
16. Administrator Attitudes	84	3	56	4	76	2	55	2
17. Community Attitudes	43	8	35	7	48	4	32	7
18. Decision Making Processes	28	11	24	11	62	3	43	3
19. Funding	8	17	8	17	16	13	15	13
20. Politics	5	20	5	20	12	17	10	17
21. Equal Opportunities	6	19	6	19	8	18	7	19
22. Salaries	2	21	2	21	2	22	2	22
23. Miscellaneous	14	13	14	12	14	14	12	14

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on gain with the number of times chosen (84) and fourth highest in number of people choosing it (56 of the 148). The "decision making processes" category ranked third on loss with 43 of 148 people choosing it 62 times. Staff quality was fourth on the loss list for number of people choosing it, but community attitudes was fourth based on the number of times chosen. Student attitudes ranked fifth in the gain lists in the number of times chosen (66) and in number of people choosing it (47). On the loss list, discipline ranked fifth in the number of people choosing it (34) but communication was fifth with a total of 45 choices.

This preliminary survey raises some questions which, if they continue to be borne out in the total study, may help us attack the confidence issue. Note, for example, that teacher attitudes and administrator attitudes are high in both gain and loss categories. Good teacher/administrator attitudes cause people to gain confidence, and poor attitudes cause people to lose confidence. This is a human relations factor; attitudes are affective (yet we constantly focus on cognitive issues). Is this an "intangible" roughly equivalent to the doctor's "bedside manner" and lawyers' "courtroom presence"?

Other points of interest occur where there are large differences between the gain/loss results. For example, good discipline does not necessarily lead to a gain in confidence (rank 13, 12 in gain), but poor discipline engenders a loss in confidence (rank 5, 8 in loss). In a similar vein, poor decision-making processes cause a loss in confidence (rank 3), but good decision-making processes are only so-so in causing a gain in confidence (rank 12). Table IV shows the top seven ranked categories by averaging the ranks of number of times chosen and number of people choosing the category for both gain and loss.

TABLE IV
Top Seven Ranked Responses for Gain or Loss in Confidence Using Average of Ranks of Times Chosen and Number of People choosing that Category

RANK	GAIN TOPIC	AVE.	LOSS TOPIC	AVE.
1	Teacher Attitudes	(1)	Teacher Attitudes	(1)
2	Communications	(2)	Administrator Attitudes	(2)
3	Academic Performance	(3)	Decision Making	(3)
4	Administrator Attitude	(3.5)	Staff Quality	(5)
5	Student Attitudes	(5)	Community Attitudes	(5.5)
6	Community Involvement	(6.5)	Academic Performance	(6.5)
7	Academic Programs	(6.5)	Discipline	(6.5)

Preliminary results show that attitudes are extremely important in both gain and loss of confidence in the schools, and that teacher attitudes are at the top of the list. Appearance of topics on one list but not the other (e.g. discipline) suggests that some confidence elements may not be on a continuum (an increase of a positive element causes an increase in confidence while a decrease of a positive element causes a decrease in confidence), but may be more accurately portrayed by clusters or factors (ala Herzberg, et. al.). Future and continuing analyses of the data should take this possibility into account.

Strategies for improving confidence must address the fact that attitudes (affective elements) are prominent in both gain and loss of confidence. Educators will need to start to pay more attention to strategies that concentrate on the affective, rather than the emphasis that has been most prominent -- the cognitive-oriented approaches employed in most communications efforts (see Figure 1, p. 6). The preliminary results show that educators must expand their confidence-building tools into strategies and techniques suggested by PR and Marketing (Figures 2 and 3, pp. 7 & 8) and into domains or action levels other than cognitive (Figure 4, p. 10).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE ELUSIVE PROBLEM OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS: DEFINITION DILEMMAS AND A SEMINAL MODEL OF BEHAVORIAL ATTRIBUTES*

One problem of the PDK Commission for Developing Public Confidence in the Schools was to attempt to derive a definition of confidence that would both provide some directions for helping to explain the problem of declining confidence and give guidance for recommendations to improve the public's confidence in the schools. This was a difficult task. This section describes some of the problems and suggests a theory or model that may be helpful in categorizing current confidence-building efforts and in suggesting different strategies for improving confidence. The following is a rather long excerpt from Commission working notes prepared by Dr. Luvern Cunningham.

> An initial task of the Commission was to address the meaning of the word confidence. Over the past dozen years or so the work has been incorporated into discussions about institutions including education. There has been a general assumption that the term was easily defined and that what confidence meant to one person probably was shared in the mind of another. There were newspaper stories in which the term confidence was displayed prominently. Headlines were found such as the following: "Confidence Erodes in Public Schools;" "Lack of Confidence Display in Education;" "What's Happened to Our Confidence in Schools?" Stories with such headlines appeared in weekly newspapers in small towns as well as in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Christian Science Monitor. Thus the focus of the work of this Commission was on the issue and/or problem of confidence in America's most basic of institutions, education.
>
> What does it mean to be confident about education? Of what is the term confidence comprised? How would you set out to measure confidence in an institution? What causes an individual to have confidence in education? To set about answering such questions the Commission wrestled very fundamentally with the word. Are there synonyms for confidence? Is it the same as satisfaction, trust, belief, attitude, support for, pride in? Moreover, from a very practical side how do schools go about developing and maintaining confidence? To what do they direct their energies? Do local school people define confidence in the same way that parents and other citizens define it? What is confidence?
>
> As our thinking progressed it became evident that confidence might be considered at several levels. Confidence in education at the classroom level may be constructed out of data that are precise and related fundamentally to students in classes engaging in learning activities. Confidence in education at the school

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*Material in this section is excerpted from Notes and Working Papers developed by Drs. Luvern L. Cunningham (Ohio State University) and C.M. Achilles (University of Tennessee) for the PDK Commission for Developing Public Confidence in the Schools, Dr. W.W. Wayson, Ohio State University, Chair.

building level may be another cup of tea. What builds confidence in the neighborhood school? Elevating the focus to the school district elicits new questions. Are feelings of confidence or lack of confidence anchored in judgments about school districts? Is it the school district and its behavior reflected through the work of superintendents, central office personnel, and the implementation of district-wide policies that cause people to have confidence or lack of confidence? And beyond the district, are state and federal levels the foci for persons having confidence in education or are they irrelevant? What is it that causes people to have confidence?

It is conceivable that people may have confidence in what occurs at the classroom level but lack confidence in education overall. Similarly it may be that people have an overall feeling of confidence in education, especially public education, but lack confidence in the classroom where their children or grandchildren are enrolled. Thus it appears that confidence is an elusive term, mercurial in some ways, hard to pin down, probably a composite of many things. But if educators and interested lay persons who want to improve and sustain and make more productive the nation's educational system cannot identify what it is that causes people to be confident, they have no way of attacking the problem. Thus precision in definition becomes all important.

The word confidence is one of those that everyone seems to sense its meaning but cannot tack down. It is a word similar to morale, leadership, and even intelligence.

Can people have macro manifestations of confidence and micro manifestations of confidence? Is it possible for a person to have confidence in public education, in general terms? People can have commitment to public education as an idea, an institutional form, a priority in terms of national purpose and objective. People can cherish the concept, nurture and protect it. In an overall sense it is important in their lives and they want it to stay in place for future generations. At the same time persons who hold such beliefs may lack confidence in their school, or in a classroom about which they have knowledge and information. Parents may be having an unhappy experience with a particular teacher or they find that textbooks and teaching materials are unsatisfactory or transportation seems unsafe or unreliable. PTA meetings are held at a bad time. The classrooms are untidy; the restrooms unclean. The principal is too soft or too autocratic. Hundreds of impressions feed the confidence concept....(Cunningham, 3/83, Working notes).

The concept of "confidence" is difficult to describe succinctly, and public confidence is even more bothersome. Although dictionary definitions provide some direction, confidence -- as perceived by the public -- seems to be more of a "feeling" or affect than a believing or a cognitive element.*

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*This discussion is from working notes provided the PDK Commission by C.M. Achilles. This was an attempt to seek a behavorial base for the decline in confidence..

The concept of "public confidence in public schools" becomes even more complex than confidence or public confidence. Nearly everyone has attended public schools at some point or has had some first-hand experience with them. Therefore, almost everyone has some "knowledge" about schools, or belief that s/he has a legitimate understanding of the public schools. However, this feeling of confidence may stem not from a cognitive understanding of the schools, but rather from subjective interpretations of experiences that people have had with the schools, such as a teacher remembered as outstanding or some school incident remembered vividly -- although perhaps not exactly correctly -- as good or bad. These are subjective impressions or value judgments rather than understandings in the sense of "data" or cognitive information. How do these fit into the confidence picture?

People's confidence apparently stems from a series of events. This series may start with an attitude, or a predisposition to act in a positive or negative, relatively unexamined way in response to a stimulus. This attitude may then develop into a pattern of beliefs, or cognitive inputs, that a person holds to be true. A belief, however, does not necessarily lead to action. (I believe that smoking is dangerous to my health -- but I still smoke!) A belief so strongly held as to lead to action is a value. A value for or related to education probably comes about through action or interaction with the stimulus (in this case, the school). Relative to public schools, many people may never get beyond the attitude stage. That is, because of their presumed "knowledge" of schools, based on some encounter with the schools, they don't pursue any further the cognitive aspects of the information they are receiving (they think they already have it because they have been to school and therefore "know" about schools). Thus, in the area of confidence in schools, people act from spotty or random information and generate their "confidence" through a set of attitudes (affective elements) rather than beliefs (cognitive input) or patterns of actions and interactions which develop strong values.

This confidence problem is compounded, however, because people act out their attitudes (for example, financing schools). Since people like to think that they act on a rational basis (particularly in money and voting matters), they find ways to rationalize, or to make cognitive, their attitudes. However, the actors don't have "knowledge" in the sense of current information; their knowledge is built upon reaction and attitudes, and not on cognitive information. Often it is built on outdated material -- from their school days.

Thus, confidence in the public schools is more of an attitudinal factor (affective), although people act as if the attitudes were knowledge or belief (cognitive). Rationalization provides them a platform for their actions and a reason to speak with authority about education. In the area of confidence in the schools, many people are out of "sync" with the rational paradigm. Attitudes are treated as if they are beliefs; beliefs are acted upon as if they are values. Things aren't what they seem so that when you move to counteract them, you often employ less than effective approaches. Let's look at this assertion in terms of one behavioral model.

Figure A-1 provides one portrayal of the relationships between/among domains of perceiving (learning/knowing) and motives for behaving. Figure

A-1 represents an operational paradigm of "normal" relationships among these variables.

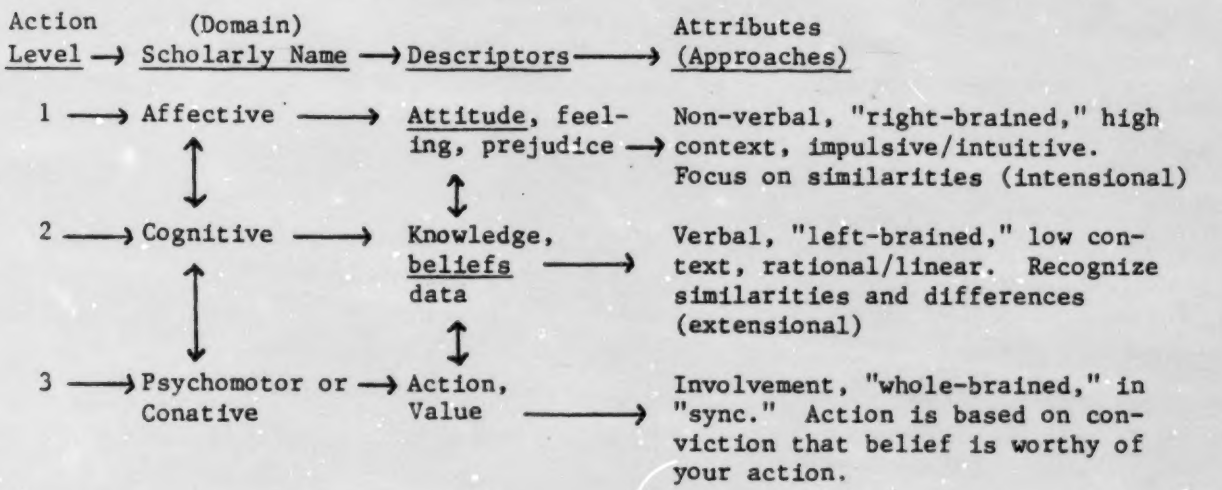

Figure A1. An operational paradigm of variables relating to normal relationships influencing knowing and acting as these influence confidence.

In confidence related to public schools, the above paradigm "slips," or gets "out of sync." People -- based on their experiences with schooling and education -- treat attitudes (level 1) as beliefs (level 2) but act (a level 3 function) on their attitudes (they vote for school board, for or against funding, etc.). Since none of us likes to believe that we act irrationally, we must "believe," or rationalize, that we have acted out of a sufficient knowledge base.

If educators believe and follow the "normal" paradigm, there are several consequences. These consequences are visible in the schools.

1. Many school confidence-building activities focus only on the cognitive when they should also focus on affective.

2. Craft knowledge encourages separation (the smaller to vote, the better for the schools) rather than involvement and open discussion.

3. Involvement is often limited to business (open houses are like a school day), which is cognitive oriented, rather than affective-oriented efforts such as coffees or socials.

4. School change efforts are developed along rational-empirical lines (people are rational; provide them the data and, left on their own, they will make the rational, or right, choice).

Figure A-2 suggests relationships between/among a "normal" paradigm (A) and the one that is used and may be causing problems in the confidence/credibility issue in public schools (B). Figure A-2 (A) represents the "normal" information (input) ⟶ knowledge ⟶ behavior or result pattern that ends up with confidence; Figure A-2 (B) represents a pattern that results in "no confidence" (or equally disturbing, in an emotional "confidence").

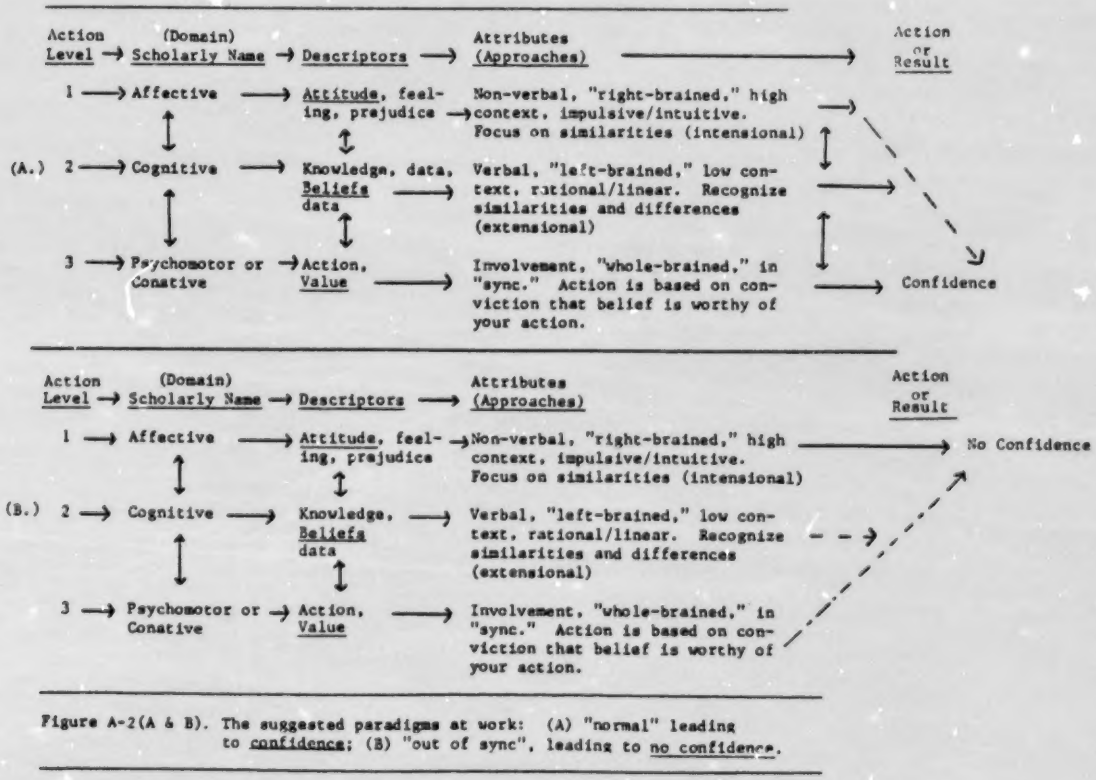
Action Level
(Domain) Scholarly Name
Descriptors
Attributes (Approaches)
Action or Result
1 Affective
Attitude, feeling, prejudice
Non-verbal, "right-brained," high context, impulsive/intuitive. Focus on similarities (intensional)
(A.) 2 Cognitive
Knowledge, data, Beliefs data
Verbal, "left-brained," low context, rational/linear. Recognize similarities and differences (extensional)
3 Psychomotor or Conative
Action, Value
Involvement, "whole-brained," in "sync." Action is based on conviction that belief is worthy of your action.
Confidence
Action Level
(Domain) Scholarly Name
Descriptors
Attributes (Approaches)
Action or Result
1 Affective
Attitude, feeling, prejudice
Non-verbal, "right-brained," high context, impulsive/intuitive. Focus on similarities (intensional)
No Confidence
(B.) 2 Cognitive
Knowledge, Beliefs data
Verbal, "left-brained," low context, rational/linear. Recognize similarities and differences (extensional)
3 Psychomotor or Conative
Action, Value
Involvement, "whole-brained," in "sync." Action is based on conviction that belief is worthy of your action.

Figure A-2(A & B). The suggested paradigms at work: (A) "normal" leading to confidence; (B) "out of sync", leading to no confidence.

If the "theory" above is a reasonably good descriptor, and if educators continue to believe that confidence in schools is described by (B), then we will continue to have problems. The model, however, suggests a way to help us adjust our processes and use new tools and techniques to meet challenges and raise confidence (as suggested by B). We need to plan and expand our confidence-building techniques to "follow the lines," using all three levels in appropriate and effective ways to generate confidence-building efforts. An analysis of this model will allow us to contemplate "confidence-raising" activities in terms of recent knowledge about learning styles (how people take in and process our information), teaching styles (how we present our information), relationships of hemispheric dominance and functioning to learning styles, and possible areas for improvement if we are going to increase "confidence." Figure A-3 shows some possible relationships.

These hypothetical notions are intended to guide our thinking in analyzing problems contributing to the decline in confidence in our schools. They lead to certain suggestions and notions tied to the confidence picture.

Characteristics of Homispheric Functioning

Hemisphere Reliance	LEARNING STYLES	COGNITIVE LEFT SEQUENTIAL	COGNITIVE LEFT LOGICAL	AFFECTIVE RIGHT INTUITIVE	AFFECTIVE RIGHT SPONTANEOUS	?	PSYCHOMOTOR OR CONATIVE
Cognitive Basically Left	I PRINT-ORIENTED	XX	XX				
	II AURAL	XX	X				
	III ORAL (INTERACTIVE)	X	X	X(?)			
Both	IV VISUAL			X(?)			
	V TACTILE (HAPTIC)						
Affective Basically Right	VI GUSTATORY/ OLFACTORY						
	VII MOTOR (OTHERS?)						X^a

Seminal Model for Expanding Confidence-Building Efforts

Fig. A-3. A seminal model for innovative expansion of confidence-building modalities. (XX indicates frequent use; X=some use.) (a) Such things as open house, booster club. Learning styles and basic table from work and discussions with R. L. French, Univ. of TN.

Suggestions

1. Conduct a study to see if this idea of "slippage" from the "normal" has any merit.

2. Analyze successful confidence-building efforts using this paradigm.

3. Develop part of the Commission report to address and treat this concern if it seems accurate (including recommendations based on an appropriate model that will guide action, testing, and evaluation.

Other Notions

1. Confidence in a school may be a factor or function of the building-level leadership (principal).

2. Confidence in a district may be different from a summation of confidence levels of individual schools.

3. Non-certified staff may be very important cogs in the confidence wheel. They interact with and influence clientele that may not get involved in formal meetings, newspaper presentations, etc.

Characteristics of Hemispheric Functioning

Hemisphere Reliance

Cognitive Basically Left — Both — Affective Basically Right

LEARNING STYLES	COGNITIVE LEFT SEQUENTIAL	COGNITIVE LEFT LOGICAL	AFFECTIVE RIGHT INTUITIVE	AFFECTIVE RIGHT SPONTANEOUS	?	PSYCHOMOTOR OR CONATIVE
I PRINT-ORIENTED	XX	XX				
II AURAL	XX	X				
III ORAL (INTERACTIVE)	X	X	X(?)			
IV VISUAL			X(?)			
V TACTILE (HAPTIC)						
VI GUSTATORY/ OLFACTORY						
VII MOTOR (OTHERS?)						X[a]

A seminal model for innovative expansion of confidence-building modalities.
(XX indicates frequent use; X=some use.) (a) Such things as open house, booster club.
Learning styles and basic table from work and discussions with R. L. French, Univ. of TN.

APPENDIX C

Categories, Definitions, and Examples

Category	Definition	Example
1. Communication	includes any reference to giving or receiving information through the media (oral or written)	a. I read in newspapers about test scores. b. The teacher tells me about class activities. c. Accidents at school are not reported to parents.
2. Community Involvement	includes any reference to the use of community members inclusing parents and/or family members in school activities	a. Senior citizens help students in the classroom. b. Parents enjoy taking part in school activities. c. Schools are closed to parents and others.
3. Academic Programs	includes any references to the overall program or curriculum and/or any specific programs within the overall program	a. Special emphasis is placed on college preparedatory courses. b. The importance of reading is emphasized. c. The curriculum is diverse.
4. Non-Academic Programs	includes references to any extra curricula programs and school related programs outside the academic program	a. Athletic teams are successful. b. Extra-curricular programs extend and enhance other programs. c. The band, chair and athletic teams are emphasized too much.
5. Student/Teacher Ratio	any reference to the number of teachers per student or classroom size	a. The classrooms are not crowded. b. The teacher has time to give individual attention.
6. Career/Higher Education Readiness	includes any reference to preparation for college or schools after high school and/or the world of work	a. Students are prepared for current job markets. b. See students applying what they have learned in the world of work. c. A low percentage of students go to college?
7. Staff Quality	includes any reference to the education, training or professional credentials of any staff member including support staff	a. The school has quality teachers. b. School support staff helps students. c. Lazy, incompetent teachers are fired.
8. Instructional Quality	any reference to the actual teaching in classroom	a. Children are getting individual attention b. Students are taught good study habits. c. Children's homework is too difficult.
9. Materials/Equipment	any reference to school materials and/or equipment	a. My child has updated books. b. Library books are in good shape. c. The school does not have modern equipment
10. Buildings/Facilities	any reference to school buidlings and/or facilities	a. The school building is clean and organized. b. General maintanence of building is good. c. School facilities are not kept in good condition.
11. Teacher/Administrator Ratio	any reference to the number of teachers and/or administrators	a. The district has a good balance of administrators and teachers. b. The district has too many teachers. c. The school has more administrators than teachers.

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12. Discipline	any reference to student behavior	a. Things are quiet and orderly on the school. b. Drugs and alcohol are controlled. c. Smoking is discouraged.
13. Academic Performance	any reference to student performance academically and/or how well they do on tests	a. When students perform well on tests as compared to state and nationwide. b. The school has high test scores. c. Children cannot read.
14. Student Attitudes	any reference to how a student feels or thinks or acts about school or school work and/or activities	a. My child enjoys school. b. My child feels that a teacher is unnecessarily harsh. c. Students do not respect teachers.
15. Teacher Attitudes	any reference to how teachers, feel, think, or act	a. Teachers are disinterested in students. b. Teachers place blame on everyone but themselves. c. Teachers go on strike.
16. Administrator Attitudes	any reference to how administrators think, feel or act	a. Academic classes are cancelled for sports activities. b. School administration do not show interest in hiring quality staff. c. Administrators and teachers bicker in public.
17. Community Attitudes	any reference to how community members, including parents, think, feel or act	a. Too many people go to school board with problems. b. School levies do not pass. c. Parents do not support the school.
18. Decision Making Process	any reference that includes making decisions about school programs, activities, or student and/or school staff	a. Programs are cut. b. Inappropriate and poor decisions are made. c. School and board decisions are student oriented.
19. Funding	any reference to how schools receive and spend money	a. When schools have sound financies. b. When good programs have budgets cut. c. There never seems to be enough money.
20. Politics	any reference to school or district politics	a. Politics get in the way of education. b. School board members politic instead of working for students. c. When politics become involved with schools.
21. Equal Opportunities	any reference to equal opportunity	a. When schools provide equal opportunity to all. b. All students are given equal opportunity. c. When all students are not treated equally.
22. Salaries	any reference to school staff salaries	a. Teachers are paid adequately. b. School staff members are having salary problems. c. Staff members are given merit raises.
23. Miscellaneous	any comment that did not fit in any other category	a. The focus of public schools is to downgrade private schools. b. There is no confidence in our local school district. c. Bussing takes place.

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